

Air rage--a new phrase that will become part of our lexicon if cell phones are allowed on commercial aircraft. Air travel is already a hassle--why does the FCC want to be responsible for making it more so? If cell phones are allowed, then let's permit audible tape players, CD players, MP3's, etc. to also intrude on fellow travelers. There's a reason why such devices aren't allowed except with earphones--out of respect for others. But cell phone conversations can't be silent, obviously, and that's the problem. Most aircraft already have phones for those rich enough or important enough that they simply must call from the air. As for the argument that public use of cell phones will enhance security--well, plenty of folks on the doomed planes of 9/11 had phones, they used them, and yet the planes were still hijacked and crashed. It's a specious argument but if it has some appeal, then let's take it to its logical extreme and allow passengers to travel armed as well. Again, however, the best reason to maintain status quo on cell phones on airplanes is to avoid the inevitable clashes between loud-mouthed cell users and their seat mates.